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Faculty Senate Minutes

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5-6-2005

# Faculty Senate Minutes - May 6, 2005

USM Faculty Senate

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**The University of Southern Mississippi**

**Faculty Senate Meeting**

**May 6, 2005**

**Gulf Park Campus**

**3:00 p.m.**

**1.0 Call to Order:** 3:05pm

**2.0 Approval of February 11, 2005 minutes:** Minutes not completed and so not available for approval. [Approved at June 2005 Faculty Senate meeting].

**3.0 Approval of Agenda:** motion seconded and approved.

**4.0 Officers' Reports**

**4.1 President Dave Beckett (Dave B)**

**4.1.1 Misc. Announcements**

Dave B. reported that the latest word from Dr. Thames is that we can expect a 5% budget cut. Gregg Lassen, CFO, estimated that to offset that sort of cut that we'd have to raise tuition 12.2%.

The search for the Associate VP of Research is close to complete. Three candidates have been interviewed and a name of one has been submitted to Dr. Burge and then to Dr. Thames for approval.

Work on the infrastructure of the old Van Hook Golf Course is supposed to begin soon. The first building is scheduled to be up twelve months from now.

A notice has gone out that health care costs are going up \$20-40 per employee with family.

Dave B. and Bill Powell drive to the coast campus monthly to meet with the Coast Council (a group of coast faculty, staff and administrators). Dr. Grimes and Dr. Malone did not attend this month's meeting. At this last meeting, the group decided it will continue to meet monthly and the faculty senate

president will preside. Also at this meeting, they discussed the scheduling issues and the need for a Chief Academic Officer (CAO) for the coast. The group passed a resolution to ask the administration for a CAO. A senator made a motion that was seconded that the senate consider a similar resolution. A lengthy discussion ensued. A senate vote was unanimous (with 3 abstentions) supporting this position. Dave B. and Bill P. will present the FS view to Provost Grimes.

Dave B. passed out handouts regarding Characteristics of the Full-Time USM Faculty from 2000-04 (Appendix 1). The analysis indicated a marked decrease in senior professorial ranks over the last two years, accompanied by a growth in the number and percentage of individuals in tenure track and non-tenure track slots.

#### **4.1.2 Robert McLaughlin**

Dave B. gave an overview of the derogatory comments regarding USM faculty made by Robert McLaughlin on the Eagle Talk chat board. Dave B. contacted Tim Ryan (director of the USM Foundation) regarding the issue. Tim Ryan assured Dave that Mr. McLaughlin's comments did not reflect those of the USM Foundation. Tim Ryan had just returned from vacation and said that he would find out more information and get back with Dave.

#### **4.1.3 Report on Cabinet Meeting**

Dr. Thames introduced the person temporarily in charge of Public Relations – Danny Mitchell from the Godwin Group.

Joan Exline presented a graph to cabinet members entitled “Trends in Faculty Retirements and Departures” from 1998-2005 (Appendix 2). Joan E. used the chart to show that for the academic year 2004-2005, only 30 faculty have left for reasons other than retirement. Dave pointed out that the 2004-2005 data were incomplete and should have been left off the chart until complete data could be collected. As is, the chart was misleading. The senate requested that the executive committee obtain departure numbers from sister institutions for comparison.

Jonathan Krebs, Student Government President, presented the cabinet with three issues that he wanted addressed: 1) faculty advising poorly, 2) faculty missing classes and 3) faculty not giving final exams on scheduled exam dates. In response, Dr. Thames stated that faculty were in essence cheating students. Following the meeting, a notice came from Provost Grimes to deans and chairs asking for names of any faculty who were not giving exams on exam dates. In response, Dave sent out a letter to chairs (Appendix 3). A great deal of discussion followed. Senators asked Dave B. if Jonathan Krebs presented data concerning these issues. Dave said there were no data presented and that he had later talked with Jonathan Krebs about the damage that blanket statements like those could cause. It was stated by a senator that new faculty probably don't even know that there is a rule about giving exams during finals week and that even the deans did not know it was a rule. Dave B. said that Joe Paul was trying to find the policy. A

senator found the rule in the Student Bulletin. Dave B. called Jonathan Krebs and will attempt to help him get a policy written and in place concerning 'dead days.'

#### 4.1.4 Inviting Ken Malone in June

A motion was made and seconded to invite Ken Malone to our next senate meeting.

#### 4.1.5 Drug and Alcohol Policy (D&A Policy)

Dr. Thames was asked about the D&A Policy by the FS Executive Committee and said that he will try to get Lee Gore to move on it.

### 4.2 President-Elect, Bill Powell (Bill P.)

#### 4.2.1 Online Evaluations

Bill P. summarized an email exchange that he and Joan Exline had concerning the Online Evaluations. Basically Dr. Exline told Bill that she was receiving complaints because there was no place for comments on the online evaluations done this spring and that she instructed students to write comments and send them to chairs. The Exec. Committee responded that though faculty value the comments and want them in the evaluation process, they were not comfortable with them in the hastily enacted online evaluations without assurance that the narrative section would be made available only to the instructor of record. It was Dr. Powell's view that the bundling of the close-ended and open-ended responses would set a precedent that might be difficult to change in later uses of the evaluation instrument. The Exec. Committee is urging the administration to reconvene the Evaluation Committee.

#### 4.2.2 Email Policy

Faculty Senate is now represented on the ITech Advisory Council. Bill P. has given Homer Coffman information regarding the email monitoring that has previously been practiced by the president. Homer emphasized that email is public information. Bill P. argued that an email policy is still needed and should include a mechanism to notify people that their email was looked at. Bill P. has invited Homer to a Faculty Senate meeting this coming fall.

#### 4.2.3 Provost Council Report

Provost Council did not meet again this month.

### 4.3 Secretary, Mary Beth Applin (Mary Beth)

4.3.1 Reminder: Last senate meeting Friday, June 10, 2005, Hall of Honors, 2:00pm. Committee reports are due.

#### 4.3.2 Increase in PERS State Contributions?

During a meeting with the Exec. Officers Mary Beth asked President Thames about the notice that came out saying that the PERS State Contribution was going up nearly 3% over the next few months. Specifically, Mary Beth asked if Optional Retirement Program (ORP) people would also be getting an increase. The president did not know but said that he could find out.

#### 4.4 Secretary-Elect, Bonnie Harbaugh

No report.

### 5.0 Committee Reports

#### 5.1 Academic and Governance

A discussion ensued about plans emerging from Recruitment Services to hold USM classes on the Oak Grove High School campus. From this discussion emerged another issue of concern for faculty – the possibility of Customer Service doing grade changes without faculty knowledge. A motion was made, seconded and passed that the Academic and Governance Committee look into these matters and report on their veracity.

#### 5.2 Administration and Faculty Evaluations

#### 5.3 Awards

The Provost had promised that there would be money for Faculty Senate Awards recipients. When Dave B. approached the Provost about providing the money, he was told that because of legal problems regarding the issue of money from E&G funds the money would have to come out of the Faculty Senate budget. Dave B. is working with Joe Morgan to determine options other than the Faculty Senate budget for providing the money. Money and plaques will be given to recipients at a future date.

Alan Thompson submitted a committee report and the FS secretary read it:

The Awards Committee solicited nominations for awards in the areas of Teaching, Research, and Creative Activity for junior faculty. Nominations for Mentoring, Community Service and Grand Marshal were solicited for more senior faculty. Only one nomination was received for Creative Activity and this person did not submit materials. Accordingly, the committee opted to recognize two junior faculty in the area of teaching.

Award recipients were as follows:

Vincent Stretch (Teaching )

Steven Scott Baker (Teaching)

Andrew Lowe (Research)

Steven Yuen (Mentoring)

Jeffrey Kaufmann (Community Service)

Jiu Ding (Grand Marshal)

Provost Grimes, in prior conversation with Dr. Beckett, obligated \$3500 to cover honoraria for the award recipients. Dr. Beckett is working to secure these funds which will be presented in the form of a check, along with a plaque, to each recipient at a media event yet to be scheduled.

[End of Report]

#### 5.4 Budget

Myron Henry reported that he had asked the administration for data concerning Student Credit hours for 2004-05 but still hadn't received this information.

#### 5.5 Constitution and Bylaws

There were some issues concerning faculty senate elections which needed to be clarified in the Constitution and Bylaws. Dave B. will work with Paula Smithka (Elections Chair) and this committee to address these issues.

#### 5.6 Faculty Welfare

#### 5.7 Government Relations

#### 5.8 Technology

Mary Beth and the Technology Committee drafted a letter concerning the problems incurred with the sudden and unannounced USM web site redesign that occurred two weeks before school ended. The draft letter was reviewed by faculty and a motion was made, seconded and passed that the letter be sent to the deans, provost, Dr. Thames and the head of ITech (Appendix 4).

#### 5.9 Elections

#### 5.9.1 Election Committee Report

Peter Butko gave a report for Paula Smithka concerning elections. First round is complete and second round has begun. There was a discussion concerning the election bylaw requires a two thirds outright winner in order to be elected. Constitution and Bylaws Committee will look at this issue. There was also discussion of whether or not that the bylaws would have to be suspended in order to postpone 3<sup>rd</sup> round elections until the fall. It was determined that the constitution adequately addresses this issue.

#### 5.10 Ad hoc committee reports and liaison reports (AAUP and others)

##### 5.10.1 President's Council

At the June meeting 2 new representatives will need to be elected to serve on the President's Council.

##### 5.10.2 AAUP

##### 5.10.3 Handbook Committee

Myron reported that the Post Tenure Review policy adopted by the senate and sent to the IHL was accepted by the Handbook Committee. The committee has developed a grievance procedure for cases of academic freedom violations – it has been submitted to the president for approval.

#### 6.0 New Business

#### 7.0 Old Business –

##### 7.1.1 College Courses at area high schools

There was a discussion about the possibility of teaching college courses at area high schools. Matt Cox, Recruitment Office, had met with a variety of committees/councils on campus to explain the benefits. The discussion focused on the issue that initiatives involving faculty and departments seem to be happening all the time on campus without input from the faculty and departments involved. It was suggested that councils, committees and departments continue to be vigilant regarding such initiatives.

#### 8.0 Other

9.0 Adjournment postponed – a motion was made, seconded and passed to recess the May meeting until June.

**Members present and those absent [in brackets] but represented by proxy (in parentheses):**

**College of the Arts & Letters**

Joe Brumeloe

[Amy Chasteen-Miller] (Amy Young)

[Phillip Gentile] (Will Watson)

Stephen Judd

John Meyer

Bill Powell

[Bill Scarborough] (Bill Powell)

[Paula Smithka] (Bill Powell)

[Jennifer Torres] (Stephen Judd)

[Anne Wallace] (Stephen Judd)

**College of Business**

James Crockett

David Duhon

Bill Gunther

[Laurie Babin](David Duhon)

**College of Education & Psychology**

Taralynn Hartsell

Melanie Norton



[Joe Olmi] (Dave Beckett)

Janice Thompson

Daniel Tingstrom (Mary Beth Applin)

### **College of Health**

Bonnie Harbaugh

Susan Hubble

[Margot Hall] (Mary Lux)

Mary Lux

[Mary Frances Nettles] (Tim Rehner)

Tim Rehner

### **College of Coastal Science**

Chet Rakocinski

Don Redalje

### **College of Science & Technology**

David Beckett, President

[Randy Buchanan] (Ray Folse)

Peter Butko

Raymond Folse

Myron Henry

[Bobby Middlebrooks] (Ray Folse)

[Alan Thompson] (Mary Beth Applin)

**University Libraries**

Mary Beth Applin

Jay Barton Spencer

**USM-Gulf Coast**

Allisa Beck

J. Pat Smith

Wil Watson

Kay Harris

**Members Absent:**

**College of the Arts & Letters:** Kate Greene

**College of Business:** James Crockett, Bill Gunther

**College of Education & Psychology:**

**College of Health:**

**College of Coastal Science:**

**College of Science & Technology:** Mary Dayne Gregg, Gail Russell

**University Libraries:**

**USM-Gulf Coast:**

## Appendix 1

### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FULL-TIME FACULTY: 5-YEAR PROFILE (USM Factbook 2004-05)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
<b>4</b>					
Professors	204	203	198	205	187
Associate Professors	172	168	140	144	152
Assistant Professors	158	172	163	169	228
Instructors	78	81	94	99	117
Other	0	0	18	70	28
Tenured	374	450	323	354	316
Tenure Track	91	87	164	178	201
Non Tenure Track	147	87	126	155	195

Conclusions: 1. Among ranks of Instructor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor, the population of Professors (Full Professors) stayed very constant from the year 2000 through 2003, making up 33% of the population each year. In 2004 it dropped to 27%.

2. Among those same four ranks, the more senior personnel (Associate Professors + Full Professors) made up 61%, 60% and 57% respectively. In 2003 this total dropped to 55%, and dropped further to 49% in

2004. If “Others” had been included in the analysis, the drop in senior personnel would have been even more marked.

3. In the years 2000 and 2001 tenured faculty made up 61% and 72% of the faculty, respectively. In both years the total of tenure track and non-tenure track faculty made up less than 40% of the full-time faculty (28% in 2001!). Conversely, in 2004 tenured faculty were in the minority, making up only 44% of the full-time faculty. The actual number of tenured faculty dropped 30% from 2001 to 2004 (from 450 people to 316). Tenure track and non-tenure track personnel in 2004 showed a large proportional increase in comparison to their numbers in 2001 through 2003. In 2004 these two components (tenure track and non-tenure track) made up 55% of the full-time faculty.

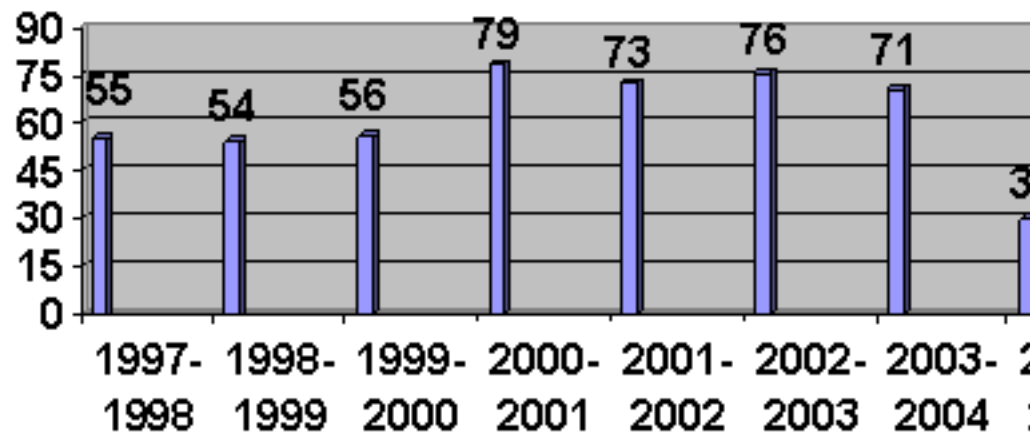
4. All these comparisons indicate a marked decrease in senior professorial ranks over the last two years, accompanied by a growth in the number and percentage of individuals in tenure track and non-tenure track slots.

**Trends in Faculty Retirements and Departures**

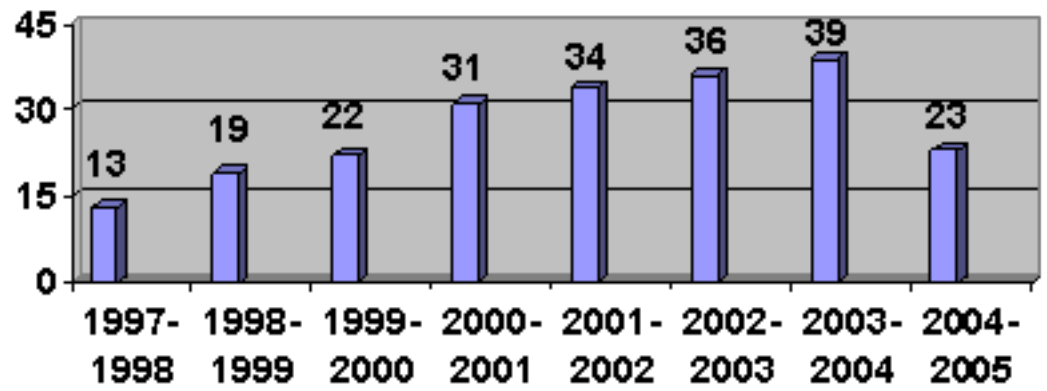
April 28, 2005

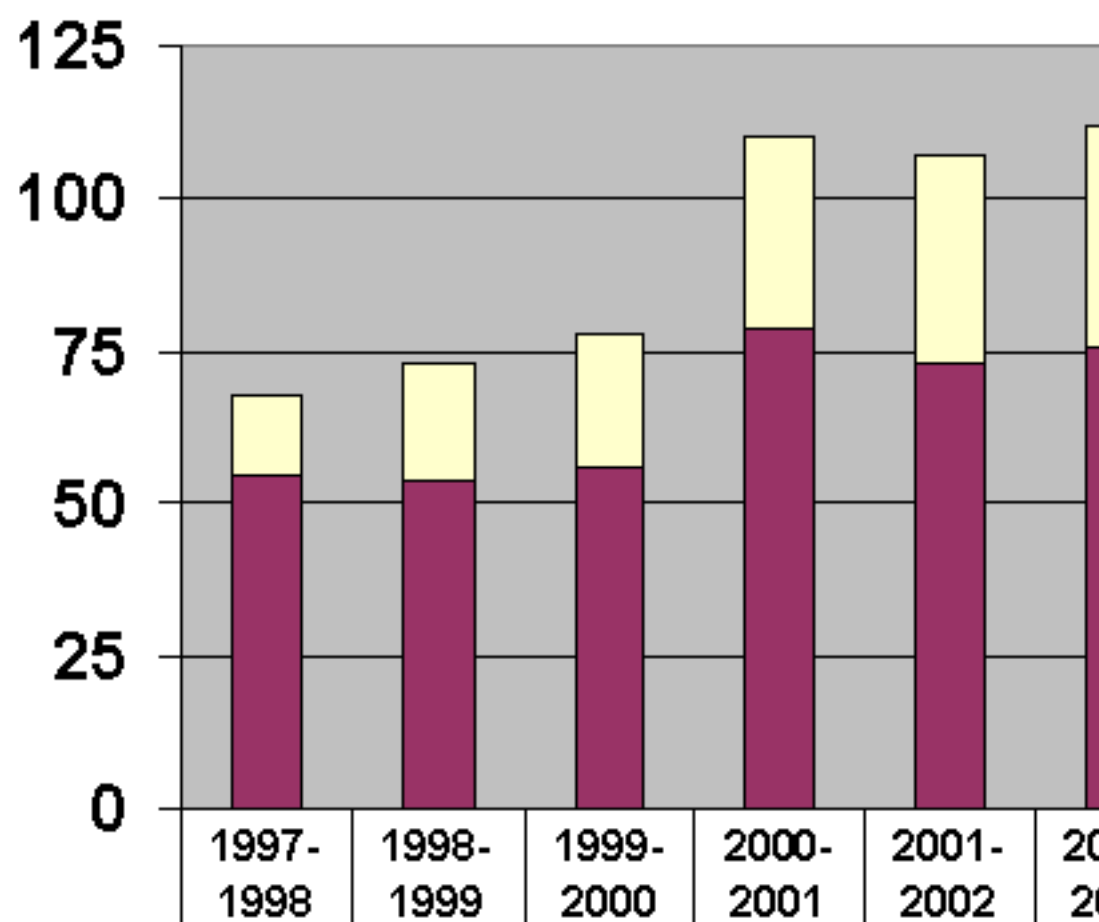
Source: Human Resources

**Faculty Departures Other than Retirement  
As of April 28, 2005**



**Faculty Retirements**  
**As of April 28, 2005**





Retirements	13	19	22	31	34	35
Other Departures	55	54	56	79	73	75

### Appendix 3

#### **Email From Dr. Grimes:**

From: Dr. Jay Grimes

Date: Mon, 2 May 2005 13:52:54

To: Deans

Cc: Dr. Shelby F. Thames

Please work with your chairs to determine if any final exams in your college are being administered prior to final exam week. If you discover that any are in fact being administered early, please provide me with the faculty member's name, course name and number and justification for early administration. I need this information by this Friday, May 6.

Thank you.

Jay

D. Jay Grimes, Ph.D.

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

The University of Southern Mississippi

Hattiesburg Office: (601) 266-5002

Gulf Coast Office: (228) 867-8795

#### **Email Response to Chairs from Dr. Dave Beckett, President Faculty Senate:**



To: Dr. Robert Bateman

Chair, Council of Chairs

From: The Executive Committee, USM Faculty Senate

Date: May 4, 2005

Dear Dr. Bateman,

Please distribute the following message from the USM Faculty Senate to each of the university's chairs. Thank you.

Dear Chairs,

I recently became aware of an email from Dr. Grimes to the deans asking for the names of the faculty who are giving their final exams prior to exam week. The email requested that the chairs/deans ferret (my term) out the offenders and report them to Dr. Grimes.

It would be useful for you to know the origin of this action. In Monday's President's Cabinet meeting the Student Government Association President, Jonathan Krebs, stated that the faculty (of USM) were giving their exams early (i.e. not during exam week). At this meeting, Dr. Thames asked for my view on this matter. I stated that: 1) it is important that faculty give their exams at the proper time; 2) the overwhelming majority of the faculty do observe this rule; 3) if individual faculty members are unaware of this rule or have ignored it their department chair should inform them of the rule and tell them to follow it. Dr. Thames and I then had a lively discussion of consequences associated with giving exams early.

The executive committee of the Faculty Senate met with Dr. Thames yesterday afternoon (a regularly scheduled meeting) and I suggested at that time that since we had so many new faculty, perhaps some of them were unaware that it is important to give final exams only during exam week. I also suggested that a notice should be sent on the university listserv approximately two weeks prior to final exams reminding faculty of this. Dr. Thames responded that these were all worthwhile suggestions.

It is important, however, that I advise you at this time that the Faculty Senate respectfully disagrees with the contention that this matter be extended beyond the departmental level. It is our view that faculty who are not giving exams at the proper time should be notified by their department chairs to rigorously observe the exam schedule.

Thank you for taking our view under consideration.

Sincerely, on behalf of the Faculty Senate,

Dr. David Beckett, President

USM Faculty Senate

## **Appendix 4**

to: ITech Advisory Committee, Judy Isbell  
from: Faculty Senate and Technology Sub-Committee  
subject: Restructured USM Web Site  
date: May 10, 2005

On Monday, May 2, 2005, the University Web site went down for an hour or two around 8:00am so that a new Web page design could be uploaded. The implementation took the University community by surprise especially when no specific notification had been made beforehand. If the University community had been consulted prior to the upload of the new site, it probably would have advised delaying the implementation of the new design until semester break to avoid causing any confusion to students, staff, and faculty one week before finals. Furthermore, consultation or communication might have ensured that vital links such as the "Online Course Evaluation," "SOAR", and "Library" would not have been omitted.

Though we appreciate the time and effort employed in this endeavor to make the new Web site more appealing and organized, we have some observations and questions that we hope you can address:

### **Questions**

Why were Public Relations personnel, as opposed to I-Tech Web personnel, primarily involved in redesigning the existing Web site? Could you please tell us their qualifications for such a project?

In terms of the focus groups involved in gathering feedback for a new Web design, why were only high school students and their parents involved as participants? Why did the scope not include the University community so that functionality could have been addressed?

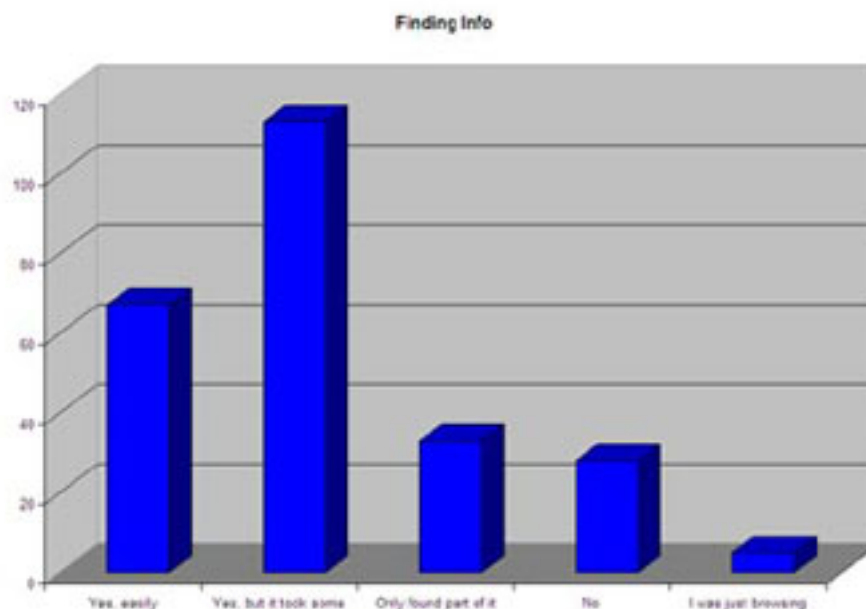
Why was a consultant company (Godwin) brought in to facilitate these focus groups when a research institution like USM could have performed a similar task with its qualified faculty and graduate students?

Did the new Web design undergo any type of usability studies before it was launched?

### Observations for Consideration

The following are some ideas for contemplation in the future, as well as now in terms of making modifications to the new Web site.

1. The web survey data and graphs found at <http://edudev.usm.edu/newweb/what.html> did not seem to support the conclusions or the design that was implemented. For instance, a chart appears entitled "Finding Info" with the subordinate paragraph that says *"Most of you (60 percent) said you either found what you were looking for at edudev.usm.edu with some effort or you only found part of what you needed. That's effort you could better spend elsewhere in our opinion. The Web should serve up the information you want... quickly."*



However, the graph that actually appeared on the site indicated that much more than 60% could find part or all of what they

were looking for. That being the case, why were any of the links found on the initial USM Web site changed on the new design?

2. Notify the university community with an exact date at least a week prior to new implementations so people aren't taken off guard by the changes.
3. Implement changes during semester breaks and/or on weekends not during work hours and not one week before finals.

4. Use university focus groups to decide 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> tier page content and links. For instance, on the "Faculty and Staff" page, services such as Bookstore, Dining, Health Services, etc., could be eliminated and placed on the page labeled "Services." A faculty focus group could have helped identify links for inclusion and elimination.
5. These are general observations and feedback that we, the Technology Committee, have received from faculty members, staff, and students:
  - a. Use basic design rules in deciding color content of pages - the half white/half gold colors used in the content listings of 2<sup>nd</sup> tier pages suggest two different content areas (the sections do not reflect any sort of recognizable navigational hierarchy).
  - b. Place links to integral places on the university campus on the Home page and in a visible place (e.g., Academics, Administration, Libraries, Soar, Online Evaluations, Directory, etc.)
  - c. Employ style sheet coding to ensure consistent text sizing for all browsers.
  - d. Font size is too small. Difficult to read for those with vision complexities.
  - e. The link for "Campus/Teaching Sites" gets lost above the picture explanation on the Home page. It looks like a header for the caption information.
  - f. Colors and design elements are used to indicate one thing in one place, but used to connote another in different place. For instance, an arrow is used to point to the caption on the Home page. However, it is not a link. That same arrow is also used to indicate a link on the "Campus/Teaching Sites" page. Thus, consistency in design and navigation are important to prevent confusing users.

- g. Avoid using all capital letters for words such as the main menu links (e.g., PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS AND PARENTS) on the Home page. In addition, these main menu links should not run onto two lines.
- h. Main menu links on the Home page should stand out (not with capitalized letters). For instance, some of our students did not know that the text were actually links (also the dim color is not that obvious with the gray color). The Button format with the links would have been much better.
- i. Need to ensure that Web pages meet **ADA** Compliancy. Right now, they do not appear to meet the ADA standards for accessible design.
- j. Graphics on the main page are not professional and change each time a person enters the site. This may cause confusion among amateur computer users.
- k. Missing buttons and links can be found throughout the various pages.
- l. The rotating pictures on the front page are nice but don't reflect the diversity of our campus.

We hope that you will take these recommendations under consideration.

Sincerely,

USM Faculty Senate Technology Committee,

On Behalf of the USM Faculty Senate